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Washington, DC – As a Member of the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education Appropriations Subcommittee, Congresswoman Betty McCollum (MN-4) has sent a letter to Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Director Peter Orszag requesting a report detailing funding information for Native American programs across all federal agencies to ensure long-term investments in education and healthcare reach Indian Country.

The letter states, “Examining all funding at all levels is necessary to track and monitor funding for American Indians and Alaska Natives, as is required by the federal trust responsibility. As long as this information is not readily available to Appropriators and Members of Congress, we do not have the information necessary for oversight to determine essential investments for the Native American citizens we represent.”

Congresswoman McCollum believes interagency collaboration is imperative and has asked for program level data on federal Indian spending in President Obama’s FY2011 budget request. The Obama administration has been very proactive on issues important to Indian Country.

During the White House Tribal Nations Conference, the President signed a memorandum directing OMB and the White House Domestic Policy Council to draft recommendations to improve tribal participation in Federal policy decisions that affect Indian tribes. At the opening ceremony for the new Embassy of Tribal Nations, which took place during the conference, Congresswoman McCollum addressed the leaders from the 564 federally recognized tribes, calling for resources to meet the needs of Indian communities and families.

“We must prevent the first Americans from becoming an invisible people in the eyes of the federal government,” McCollum wrote in the letter to OMB Director Orszag.

A champion for education and health care, On October 16, 2009, Congresswoman McCollum sent two letters to administration officials. The letter to Secretary of Education Arne Duncan and Secretary of Interior Ken Salazar encouraged greater partnership and collaboration between the two agencies on the education of American Indian and Alaska Native children. The other letter to OMB Director Orszag focused attention to the lack of Recovery Act funding reaching Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) schools.

[Read November 5 letter to OMB Director Orszag](#)

[Read October 16 letter to Secretary Duncan & Secretary Salazar](#)

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[Read October 16 letter to OMB Director Orszag](#)

Congresswoman Betty McCollum (MN-4) serves on the House Appropriations & Budget Committees.

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